

From: Chris Eash
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 10:30am
Subject: Microsoft and "freedom to innovate".

Hello,

As an undergraduate engineering student at the University of Tennessee, I use Microsoft software on a daily basis, not by choice, but only because no alternative exists for certain applications. As a user of other operating systems (Linux, Macintosh, Sun Solaris) I am keenly aware that the internet provides excellent cross platform interoperability. Things are changing however, as web sites follow the trend of writing HTML that is Internet Explorer specific. Try visting the 2002 Winter Games web site on a Macintosh using Netscape, the page is not navigable. Microsoft's monopoly is so extensive that despite complaints, most sites will not alter HTML that does not function on non Microsoft software. Eventually the internet will be navigable only with Microsoft products, or products with reverse engineered compatability. With Microsofts propriatary software and legal clout, reverse engineering might one day become impossible. Add the Microsoft .NET strategey and you have a company that has made great leaps in controlling the computer desktop and the internet while crushing competitors and avoiding any significant punishment. To Microsoft "freedom to innovate" means freedom to build a monolpoly, crush Netscape, Linux, Apple, Corel, or any other significant competitor, in any market. Ask yourself: "Why does Microsoft charge for MS Office but give away Internet Explorer for free?".

Thank you,

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